

ABSTRACT

A method and system for accessing network directory data as uses a Web service as an interface between a directory database and network clients. To support extensibility of the object types in the directory database, directory access methods are defined for a generic object class from which classes for different directory object types are derived. A description of the object classes and database operation methods is provided by the Web service to the client. To access the directory database, the runtime environment of the client is used to create objects on which a requested directory operation method operates according to the proper class definitions of the object types. The request with serialized objects is sent to the Web service, which then uses information provided by the objects in the request to access the directory database to carry out the requested directory operation method.